

# 2023 Graduation Cohort: Phase II-III Appeals Guide

Date: June 2023

## Important Updates in 2022-23

- **New in 2022-23:**
  - Students who received a regular diploma must also complete ***all required courses in all subject areas*** to be counted in the federal graduation rate. Tasks required to verify the federal graduation rate for the 2023 graduating cohort are embedded in Phase II and Phase III.
  - During each phase, a remediation window is embedded in the process to resolve any pending issues due to insufficient documentation. By the end of each remediation window, all issues related to the relevant tasks specified in each phase shall be resolved. Any issues related to Phase I data shall be resolved by the end of the Phase I remediation window. Phase I data will no longer be appealable during Phase II.
  - All appeals shall be submitted using an online form: click [here](#) to access the Phase II appeals form; click [here](#) to access the Phase III appeals form.
- **Timelines for Phases II and III are updated:**
  - ***Phase II tasks shall be completed by 5 p.m. CST on August 18, 2023***, including (1) entering completion information for summer graduates; (2) importing the complete student transcript data in EIS for the graduating cohort (***optional***); (3) submitting 60-day appeals; and (4) submitting appeals ONLY to records that were submitted in Phase I. Appeals will only be considered to correct information when the issue is not due to district error or incomplete submission. All issues related to Phase II appeals shall be resolved by the end of the remediation window.
  - ***Phase III tasks shall be completed by 5 p.m. CST on September 20, 2023***, including (1) submitting appeals only for summer graduates whose completion status were updated in Phase II, (2) submitting appeals ONLY for receiving students because of the 60-day appeal process, (3) submitting appeals for the federal graduation rate reporting (***new***), and (4) reviewing preliminary graduation rate data. Appeals will only be considered to correct information when the issue is not due to district error or incomplete submission. All issues related to Phase III appeals shall be resolved by the end of the remediation window.
- Reach out to [TNEd.Graduates@tn.gov](mailto:TNEd.Graduates@tn.gov) for all questions related to the Cohort process.

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# Section 1: Federal Graduation Rate Guidelines

Federal guidelines require the Tennessee Department of Education (department) to calculate the four-year graduation rate by only including students who complete **all required coursework in all subject areas** and graduate with a regular diploma or an alternate academic diploma (AAD) within four years and a summer as a high school graduate in his or her original cohort. In response to this requirement, the department will calculate and report two graduation rates for accountability purposes. First, the department will calculate the **federal graduation rate** following the federal guideline. Second, the department will calculate the **Tennessee graduation rate** following the Tennessee State Board of Education (SBE) [High School Policy 2.103<sup>1</sup>](#). The distinction between the two is discussed below.

## 1.1. Federal Graduation Rate

When calculating the federal graduation rate, only students that complete **all required coursework in all subject areas** per the requirements of ESSA § 8101(25) will be included in the numerator of the federal graduation rate calculation. The [SBE's High School Policy 2.103](#) provides an alternative pathway for students with disabilities to earn a regular diploma without completing Algebra II (or integrated Math III) and/or Chemistry or Physics. Per federal guidelines, students taking the alternative pathway shall not be counted as graduates in the federal graduation rate calculation.

Federal requirement on the graduation rate calculation only affects federal reporting; it does not supersede the SBE's [High School Policy 2.103](#), which governs the awarding of regular diplomas to students with disabilities in Tennessee. The federal graduation rate requirement shall not change what students experience in the classroom.

The graduates defined by the federal graduation rate will be used to calculate the graduation rate for schools and districts and be used to evaluate the Graduation Rate indicator. The federal graduation rate will also be used to identify Priority/Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) schools and the Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) schools (i.e., Any school with a graduation rate less than 67% will earn Priority status; any school with a graduation rate less than 67% for a given student group will earn ATSI designation during the identification year).

## 1.2. Tennessee Graduation Rate

The Tennessee graduation rate will be calculated in accordance with the SBE's [High School Policy 2.103](#). Students with disabilities who complete four years of English language arts (ELA) and math in extended courses (A/B courses) and those who received three credits of science in accordance with the [High School Policy 2.103](#) will continue to receive a regular diploma and be included in the numerator of the Tennessee graduation rate calculation. The graduates defined by the Tennessee graduation rate will be used to calculate the *Ready Graduate* rate and the ACT/SAT participation rate.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Also see CHAPTER 0520-01-03-.06

<sup>2</sup> ACT participation rate is the number of graduates with a **regular diploma** and a valid ACT/SAT score divided by the number of graduates with a regular diploma. The *Ready Graduate* rate is the number of graduates with a *Ready Graduate* status divided by the number of students in the graduating cohort. For both rates, the graduates defined by the Tennessee graduate rate are used in the calculation.



## Section 2: Cohort Phase II-III Overview

The purpose of the 2022-23 cohort process is to ensure that 2023 graduating cohort data is complete and accurate for accountability and federal reporting purposes. Graduation rate data lag for one year. The 2023 graduating cohort's graduation data will be used for accountability in the 2023-24 school year. The cohort process has four phases:

- **Phase I (November 11, 2022 – June 30, 2023):** By the end of Phase I, districts shall have updated and corrected student information and uploaded the required documentation for the corresponding withdrawal codes and completion codes entered in EIS. All issues regarding Phase I tasks, including (1) submitting completion and withdrawal information in EIS, (2) submitting cohort change requests, and (3) addressing other cohort-related issues, shall be addressed by the end of the Phase I remediation window as the data updated during Phase I will be finalized by the end of the Phase I process.
- **Phase II (July 17, 2023 – August 25, 2023):** Districts have three major tasks: (1) report summer graduates in EIS; (2) import the complete student transcript data (extract 80) in EIS for the 2023 graduating cohort (**optional**); and (3) submit 60-day appeals. All issues regarding these three tasks shall be addressed by the end of the Phase II remediation window as the data updated during Phase II will be finalized by the end of the Phase II process.
- **Phase III (August 28, 2023 – September 26, 2023):** The major task for districts is to appeal three types of appealable issues: (1) submit appeals for summer graduates (only for appealable situations); (2) submit appeals for receiving students because of a 60-day appeal approval; (3) submit cohort appeals for federal graduation rate reporting (**new**). All issues regarding the appeals shall be addressed by the end of the Phase III remediation window as the data updated in Phase III will be finalized by the end of the Phase III process. In this phase, districts can also review their preliminary graduation rate in the Cohort application; however, this data will not reflect possible changes resulting from the appeals.
- **Phase IV (October 2, 2023 – October 5, 2023):** All cohort and graduation data are final in Phase IV. Final cohort data will be uploaded on the Cohort application on October 2 for district review before graduation data are released through [Data Downloads](#) on October 5.

Information regarding Phase I tasks is available in the [2022-23 Graduation Cohort Protocol](#). This document also discusses the tasks, processes, and timelines for Phases II and III. These two phases allow districts to complete the submission of information for summer graduates and submit appeals as needed, and resolve any issues related to the graduation data in accordance with state and federal guidelines. In particular, districts should focus on the appealable issues specified in [Section 4.1](#). Appealable issues specific to the federal graduation rate calculation are discussed in detail in [Section 4.1.5 \(New in 2022-23\)](#). Non-appealable issues listed in [Section 4.2](#) should have been addressed during Phase I; therefore, they are not appealable during the Phase II and Phase III appeals process.

Districts must be actively engaged in the cohort process as the graduating cohort data will also be utilized for the ACT/SAT participation calculation and the subsequent determination of *Ready Graduate* status. Once the cohort data are finalized by the end of the cohort process, it cannot be appealed.

## Section 3: Cohort Phase II-III Tasks and Timelines

Table 1 summarizes the key tasks and timelines for districts in Phase II and Phase III. There are four windows within each phase. It is essential that districts complete the required tasks following the specified timeline.

**Table 1. Cohort Phase II-III Tasks Timelines**

Cohort Phase II (July 17 – August 25, 2023)		
Date	Milestone	Tasks
July 17 – August 4, 2023	<b>Submission window:</b> Phase II tasks complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report summer graduates in EIS</li> <li>Import the complete student transcript data (extract 80) in EIS for the 2023 graduating cohort (<b>optional</b>)</li> <li>Submit appeals for appealable situations (see <a href="#">Section 4.1</a>), including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department errors</li> <li>System error</li> <li>The 60-day appeal</li> </ul> </li> <li>Monitor the Cohort application regularly to review the department's responses</li> <li>Any new inquiries submitted after August 4 will be denied.</li> </ul>
August 11, 2023	<b>Initial response window:</b> Initial response letter sent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check the Cohort application for summer graduate information</li> <li>The director of schools will receive an initial response letter by August 11 for any Phase II appeals submitted by August 4.</li> <li>The initial response letter will be uploaded on the Accountability application.</li> </ul>
August 14-18, 2023	<b>Remediation window:</b> Resubmission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resubmit appeals only when additional appropriate documentation is available</li> <li>All resubmissions must be submitted by August 18.</li> </ul>
August 25, 2023	<b>Final Response window:</b> Final	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The director of schools will receive a final response letter for the resubmitted appeals by August 25; all decisions will be final.</li> </ul>
Cohort Phase III (August 28 – September 26, 2023)		
Date	Milestone	District Tasks to be Completed
August 28 – September 8, 2023	<b>Submission window:</b> Phase III tasks complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit appeals for appealable situations (see <a href="#">Section 4.1</a>), including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department errors</li> <li>system error</li> <li>receiving students because of a 60-day appeal approval</li> <li>federal graduation rate appeal (<b>new</b>)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Any new inquiries submitted after September 8 will be denied.</li> </ul>
September 15, 2023	<b>Initial response window:</b> Initial response letter sent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The director of schools will receive an initial response letter by September 15 for any Phase III appeals submitted by September 8.</li> <li>The initial response letter will be uploaded on the Accountability application.</li> </ul>
September 18-20, 2023	<b>Remediation window:</b> Resubmission complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resubmit appeals only when additional appropriate documentation is available.</li> <li>All resubmissions must be submitted by September 20.</li> </ul>
September 26, 2023	<b>Final Response window:</b> Final response letter sent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The director of Schools will receive a final response letter for the resubmitted appeals by September 26; all decisions will be final.</li> </ul>





## 3.1 Phase II Tasks and Timeline

### 3.1.1 Submission Window

During Phase II, there are three major tasks during the submission window.

- **Report Summer Graduates.** The first task is to report summer graduates in EIS. Summer graduates must have a completion date after June 16, 2023, and with a completion code of SU. To withdraw a summer graduate, districts must identify an appropriate withdrawal code and provide appropriate documentation to support the withdrawal reason. The event that leads to summer graduate withdrawal must be dated after June 16, 2023. More information regarding the appropriate withdrawal codes and documentation is available in [the 2022-23 Graduation Cohort Protocol](#).
- **Import student transcript data in EIS (optional).** In Phase II, districts may import the **complete student transcript data** for the 2023 graduating cohort in EIS. This is an optional task for districts. The department will use the course enrollment data and student transcript data, when available, to identify students who did not meet the federal graduation definition (i.e., exclusion list). Extract 80 is the data file that districts shall use to import the transcript data in EIS. Districts shall reach out to their EIS Supervisor or [DT.Support@tn.gov](mailto:DT.Support@tn.gov) for more guidance on importing student transcript data in EIS, as needed.
- **Submit appeals.** In Phase II, districts shall submit appeals for three appealable scenarios, including (1) department error, (2) system error, and (3) the 60-day appeals (see [Section 4.1](#) for appealable issues).

All required tasks must be completed within the submission window **by 5 p.m. CT on August 4, 2023**. The department will not review any new submissions or appeals submitted outside of this window.

### 3.1.2 Initial Response Window

The department will provide an initial response to all documentation and appeals submitted during the submission window. The response letter will be sent to the directors of schools and uploaded to the Accountability application **by 5 p.m. CT on August 11, 2023**.

### 3.1.3 Remediation Window

This window is intended for districts to review the records that were denied by the department as specified in the initial response letter. Districts shall only resubmit the appeal when additional documentation is available to support the case. All issues related to Phase II tasks shall be resolved by **August 18, 2023**.

### 3.1.4 Final Response Window

The department will provide a final response letter to the resubmitted appeals. The response letter will be sent to the directors of schools and uploaded to the Accountability application **by 5 p.m. CT on August 25, 2023**. All decisions made in the final response letter are final.

## 3.2 Phase III Tasks and Timeline

### 3.2.1 Submission Window

Submitting appeals is the major task during the Phase III submission window. There are four types of appeals that districts shall address during the submission window, including (1) department error, (2) system error, (3) students received because of a 60-day appeal approval, and (4) federal graduation rate appeals (see [Section 4.1](#) for appealable issues). All appeals must be completed within the submission window **by 5 p.m. CT on September 8, 2023**. The department will not review any new appeals submitted outside of this window.

### 3.2.2 Initial Response Window

The department will provide an initial response to all appeals submitted during the submission window. The response letter will be sent to the directors of schools and uploaded to the Accountability application **by 5 p.m. CT on September 15, 2023**.

### 3.2.3 Remediation Window

This window is intended for districts to review the records that were denied by the department as specified in the initial response letter. Districts shall only resubmit the appeal when additional documentation is available to support the case. All issues related to Phase III tasks shall be resolved by **September 20, 2023**.

### 3.2.4 Final Response Window

The department will provide a final response letter to the resubmitted appeals. The response letter will be sent to the director of schools and uploaded to the Accountability application **by 5 p.m. CT on September 26, 2023**. All decisions made in the final response letter are final.

## Section 4: Appeal Parameters and Documentation

This section describes appealable and non-appealable situations during Phases II and III, and the required documentation to support the appeals.

### 4.1 Appealable issues

#### 4.1.1 Department Error

Districts can submit appeals when the incorrect data are a result of a department error in updating the data that was previously approved by the department. To support the appeal, districts must provide **written confirmation** that the department committed to updating the Cohort application but did not do so (e.g., moving students from the current cohort to next year's cohort; approved appeals shown in the initial or final response letters). **Note.** Districts can submit department error appeals in Phase II and Phase III.

#### 4.1.2 System Error

Districts can submit appeals when the district's EIS extracts failed to process **before** the deadline. A screenshot of the extract submission error message, including the date and time stamp, may be used to document the error. Districts shall email [DT.Support@tn.gov](mailto:DT.Support@tn.gov) to resolve the issue and notify the department at [TNED.Graduates@tn.gov](mailto:TNED.Graduates@tn.gov) immediately when a failure to the process occurs. **Note.** Districts can submit department error appeals in Phase II and Phase III.

#### 4.1.3 60-Day Appeal

Districts can submit a 60-day appeal with documentation (e.g., enrollment record) demonstrating that a student was enrolled for less than 60 instructional days of the most recent school year. The student will then be reassigned to the high school at which the student was enrolled for the greatest proportion of school days in grades 9–12. [TCA §49-1-601](#) requires the department to count these students in the cohort of the most recent school and district in which the student was enrolled for more than 60 instructional days during high school. The department will send notifications to any districts affected by such changes. **Note.** The 60-day appeals must be submitted during Phase II.

#### 4.1.4 60-day Appeal for Students Received

Districts can submit an appeal for students they received because of another district's 60-day appeal. The appeal must be supported by appropriate documentation (e.g., enrollment record). This type of appeal can only be submitted during Phase III.

#### 4.1.5. Federal Graduation Rate Data Appeal

As discussed in [Section 1.1](#), students with a regular diploma must also **complete all required coursework in all subject areas** to be counted as graduates in the federal graduation rate calculation. In Phase II, districts may import the complete student transcript data in EIS. The department will then use the enrollment data and student transcript data, when available, to identify an **exclusion list** comprised of students who should be removed from the numerator of the federal graduation rate calculation per federal guidelines. The exclusion list will include any students who received a regular diploma but did not receive a credit in Algebra II/Integrated Math III and/or Chemistry or Physics (see [Section 3.1.1](#)). In Phase III, districts will be able to download the exclusion list from the Accountability application. Districts shall review the exclusion list and submit appeals, as needed, to finalize the list for the federal graduation rate calculation.

Districts can only submit appeals for students who have proper documentation (i.e., student transcript) of receiving credit(s) for the required course(s). For students who did not receive credit(s) for the required course(s) because of the district's college-level course graduation substitution policy, districts shall provide the district policy guided by the state board graduation substitution policy<sup>3</sup> as supporting documentation. An appropriate district substitution policy should, at a minimum, include a comprehensive list of all eligible college-level courses that provides a clear guideline for schools regarding which college-level courses can be used for course substitutions in all subject areas that meet SBE graduation requirements. The list should include (1) subject area, (2) type of college-level course (e.g., International Baccalaureate program, Cambridge program, advanced placement, dual enrollment, local dual credit, state dual credit, etc.), (3) course name, and (4) course code. The course name and course code should be the same as the information presented in the EIS or SIS transcript. ***Students who enrolled but did not receive full credit for the course are not eligible for appeals.***

When submitting an appeal, districts must provide an official student transcript for each appeal case. The transcript must show the following information:

- District name
- School name
- Student ID
- Student name
- Appealed course
- Appealed course code
- Substituted course (only applicable for substitution records)
- Substituted course code (only applicable for substitution records)

The department will only accept official transcripts from the current district or the out-of-state sending district as the required supporting documentation. Any appeals without an official transcript and substitution policy, as appropriate, will be denied automatically. **Note.** Federal graduation rate data appeals can only be submitted during Phase III.

## 4.2. Non-appealable Cohort Issues

The non-appealable cohort issues are specified below:

- Cohort change requests should have been submitted and completed by the Phase I deadline (June 30, 2023). The department will not accept any new cohort change requests during the Phase II or Phase III appeals windows.
- The district did not correct inaccurate data elements (e.g., withdrawal code, race/ethnicity, year entered grade 9, economically disadvantaged, disability status, English learner status, etc.) before the Phase I deadline.
- The district did not upload documentation before the specified deadline. The department will deny requests to review documentation submitted for the first time during the appeals windows.

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<sup>3</sup> [SBE rule 0520-01-03-.03\(7\)](#) states, "LEAs shall award high school credit to students who successfully complete college-level courses aligned to a graduation requirement course, including general education and elective focus courses." See, also, [SBE Graduation Substitutions Policy 3.103 \(approved on First Reading, pending final approval as of the date of this publication\)](#).

- The district did not enter the required completion data in EIS before the deadline. Completion data for fall and spring graduates should have been entered by the Phase I deadline; completion data for summer graduates should have been entered by the Phase II deadline.

## Section 5. Cohort Appeals Submission Process

This section describes the submission process for each phase.

### 5.1. Phase II Submission Process

During the Phase II submission window, all appeals must be submitted before **5 p.m. CT on August 4, 2023**. Districts must complete the following for their Phase II appeals to be reviewed:

- Complete the [Cohort Phase II Appeals Submission Worksheet](#)
  - See [Section 5.1.1](#) for how to complete the worksheet
  - Save the worksheet as an Excel file with the naming convention **“###\_Appeals\_Submission\_Worksheet”** where ### is the district number.
- Compile supporting documentation for all appealed records.
  - Consult [Section 4.1](#) for appropriate supporting documentation for the appealable situations.
  - Save supporting documentation as a single PDF file with the naming convention **“###\_SupportingDocumentation”** where ### is the district number.
  - Any appeals without supporting documentation for the appealed students will be denied automatically.
- Submit the worksheet and the supporting documents using the [2022-23 Graduation Cohort Phase II Appeals Form](#).

During the remediation window, the district shall review the initial appeals response letter and resubmit the worksheet and the supporting documents, as appropriate, for the denied appeals using the [2022-23 Graduation Cohort Phase II Appeals Form](#). Repeat the same process as described above **ONLY** for the records that have appropriate documentation to support the denied appeals. The Phase II submission process is discussed in detail in the following sections.

#### 5.1.1. Phase II Worksheet

Please follow all directions listed below very closely to support the timely and accurate resolution of the appeals in question. Any questions related to the Cohort process shall be directed to [TNED.Graduates@tn.gov](mailto:TNED.Graduates@tn.gov).

**Step 1.** Download the [Cohort Phase II Appeals Submission Worksheet](#) from the Cohort application or TDOE website.

**Step 2.** Fill out the “Contact\_Info” tab.

- Enter a valid date in cell B2 (format: MM/DD/YYYY).
- Enter your district number in cell B3.
  - This should automatically populate your district name, director’s name, and director’s email address.
  - Contact the department at [TNED.Graduates@tn.gov](mailto:TNED.Graduates@tn.gov) if any of the information that automates is incorrect.
- Enter the name of the person who serves as the point of contact for graduation cohort data in cell B7.
- Enter the email address of the graduation cohort point of contact in cell B8.

- e. Enter the phone number for the graduation cohort point of contact in cell B9.
  - Enter the phone numbers without symbols; the numbers will automatically format.
- f. Enter the appropriate phone extension in cell D9, if applicable.

**Step 3.** Fill out the “District\_Appeals” tab.

- a. Enter the first student’s state ID number into cell A2.
  - If you have correctly completed the “Contact\_Info” tab, your district’s number and name will automatically fill in.
- b. Enter the school number for the first student in cell D2.
  - You can find the school number in the Cohort application and downloadable files.
- c. Enter the student’s last name in cell E2.
- d. Select the reason for the appeal from the dropdown menu in cell F2.
- e. Enter an explanation of the appeal in cell G2, highlighting the details of the situation and citing relevant guidance documents as needed.
- f. Repeat steps a–c for any remaining students.

**Step 4.** Save the Appeals Submission Worksheet Excel file.

- a. Save the file using the following naming convention: “**###\_Appeals\_Submission\_Worksheet**” where “###” is your district number.
- b. Submit only one Appeals Submission Worksheet per district.

### 5.1.2. Phase II Submission Form

All Phase II appeals must be submitted using the [2022-23 Graduation Cohort Phase II Appeals Form](#) by **5 p.m. CT on August 4, 2023**. The person submitting the appeals form must have an Orion/SSO account to submit the form. Districts will need to provide the following information when submitting the form:

- District Number
- District Name
- Name and Email of person submitting form
- Director of Schools Name
- Director of Schools Email
- [Cohort Phase II Appeals Submission Worksheet](#)
  - The worksheet must be submitted as an Excel file with the naming convention “**###\_Appeals\_Submission\_Worksheet**” where ### is the district number
- Supporting Documentation
  - must be submitted as a pdf file with the naming convention “**###\_SupportingDocumentation**” where ### is the district number
  - **Important Note.** Documentation must be provided for each student being appealed. Failure to include supporting documentation will result in a denial.

Districts must submit all appeals as well as the required documentation before **5 p.m. CDT, August 4, 2023**. Any appeals and documentation submitted past the timeline will be denied. If you need assistance submitting the [form](#), please consult the Microsoft Form Login and Trouble Shooting Guide (see [Appendix](#)) or email [TNEd.Graduates@tn.gov](mailto:TNEd.Graduates@tn.gov).

## 5.2. Phase III Submission Process

During the Phase III submission window, all appeals must be submitted before **5 p.m. CT on September 8, 2023**. Districts must complete the following for their Phase III appeals to be reviewed:

- Complete the [Cohort Phase III Appeals Submission Worksheet](#)
  - See [Section 5.2.1](#) for how to complete the worksheet
  - Save the worksheet as an Excel file with the naming convention **“###\_Appeals\_Submission\_Worksheet”** where ### is the district number.
- Compile supporting Documentation
  - If submitting documentation for a summer graduate or 60-day approval appeal, please save all supporting documentation for all students as a single PDF file with the naming convention **“###\_Appeals\_SupportingDocumentation”** where ### is the district number. Refer to [section 4.1](#) for appealable situations and required documentation. Any appeals without supporting documentation for the appealed students will be denied automatically.
  - If submitting documentation for a federal graduation rate appeal, please save all supporting documentation for all students as a single PDF file with the naming convention **“###\_FedGradRate\_SupportingDocumentation”** where ### is the district number. Refer to [section 4.1.5](#) for appealable situations and required documentation. Any appeals without supporting documentation for the appealed students will be denied automatically.
- Submit the worksheet and supporting documents using the [2022-23 Graduation Cohort Phase III Appeals Form](#).

During the remediation window, districts shall review the initial appeals response letter and resubmit the worksheet and the supporting documents, as appropriate, for the denied appeals using the [2022-23 Graduation Cohort Phase III Appeals Form](#). Repeat the same process as described above **ONLY** for the records with appropriate documentation to support the denied appeals. The Phase III submission process is discussed in detail in the following sections.

### 5.2.1. Phase III Worksheet

Please follow all directions listed below very closely to support the timely and accurate resolution of the appeals in question. Any questions related to the Cohort process shall be directed to [TNED.Graduates@tn.gov](mailto:TNED.Graduates@tn.gov).

**Step 1.** Download the [Cohort Phase III Appeals Submission Worksheet](#) from the Cohort application or TDOE website.

**Step 2.** Fill out the “Contact\_Info” tab.

- a. Enter a valid date in cell B2 (format: MM/DD/YYYY).
- b. Enter your district number in cell B3.
  - This should automatically populate your district name, director’s name, and director’s email address.
  - Contact the department at [TNED.Graduates@tn.gov](mailto:TNED.Graduates@tn.gov) if any of the information that automates is incorrect.
- c. Enter the name of the person who serves as the point of contact for graduation cohort data in cell B7.



- d. Enter the email address of the graduation cohort point of contact in cell B8.
- e. Enter the **numbers** only of the phone number for the graduation cohort point of contact in cell B9.
  - The numbers will automatically format.
- f. Enter the appropriate phone extension in cell D9, if applicable.

**Step 3.** Fill out the “District\_Appeals” tab.

- a. Enter the first student’s state ID number into cell A2.
  - If you have correctly completed the “Contact\_Info” tab, your district number and district name will automatically fill in.
- b. Enter the school number for the first student in cell D2.
  - You can find the school number in the Cohort application and downloadable files.
- c. Enter the student’s last name in cell E2.
- d. Select the reason for the appeal from the dropdown menu in cell F2.
- e. Enter an explanation of the appeal in cell G2, highlighting the details of the situation and citing relevant guidance documents as needed.
- f. Repeat steps a–c for any remaining students.

**Step 4:** Fill out the “2023\_Fed\_Grad\_Rate” tab.

- Enter the first student’s state ID number into cell A2.
- a. If you have correctly completed the “Contact\_Info” tab, your district number and district name will automatically fill in.
  - b. Enter the school number for the first student in cell D2.
    - You can find the school number in the Cohort application and downloadable files.
  - c. Enter the student’s last name in cell E2 and the student’s first name in cell F2.
  - d. Enter the reason for appeal in G2.
  - e. Enter the graduating cohort (2023) in H2.
  - f. Enter the school year when the student received the credit for the appealed course in I2.
  - g. If appealing a college-level course substitution, please enter the title of the course as it appears on the student’s supporting documentation (transcript or SIS report).

**Step 5.** Save the Appeals Submission Worksheet Excel file.

- a. Save the file using the following naming convention: “**###\_Appeals\_Submission\_Worksheet**” where “**###**” is your district number.
- b. Submit only one Appeals Submission Worksheet per district.

## 5.2.2. Phase III Submission Form

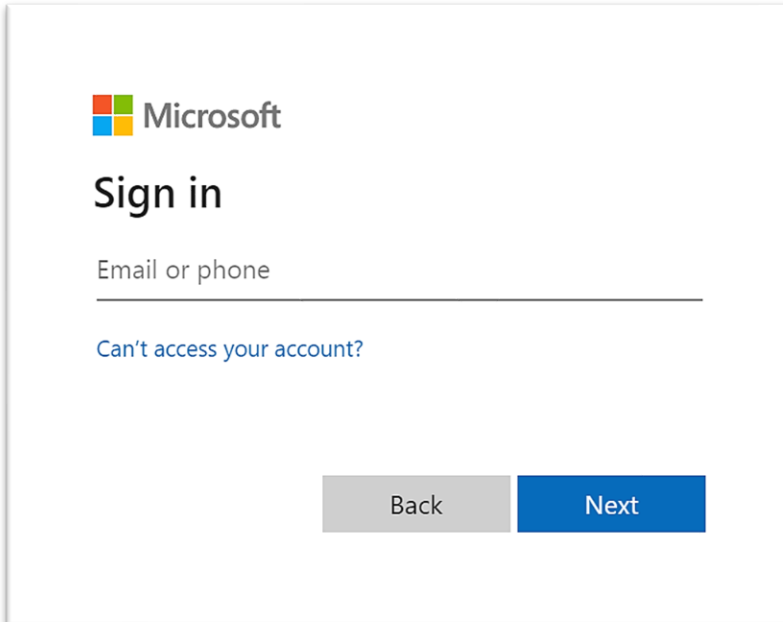
All Phase III appeals must be submitted using the [2022-23 Graduation Cohort Phase III Appeals Form](#) by **5 p.m. CT on September 8, 2023**. The person submitting the appeals form must have an Orion/SSO account to submit the form. Districts will need to provide the following information when submitting the form:

- District Number
- District Name
- Name and Email of the person submitting the form
- Director of Schools Name

- Director of Schools Email
- [Cohort Phase III Appeals Submission Worksheet](#)
  - must be submitted as an Excel file with the naming convention **“###\_Appeals\_Submission\_Worksheet”** where ### is the district number
- Supporting documentation
  - Supporting documentation for the approved 60-day appeal must be submitted as a pdf file with the naming convention **“###\_Appeals\_SupportingDocumentation”** where ### is the district number
  - Supporting documentation for a federal graduation rate appeal must be submitted as a pdf file with the naming convention **“###\_FederalGradRate\_SupportingDocumentation”** where ### is the district number
  - **Important Note:** Documentation must be provided for each student being appealed. Failure to include supporting documentation will result in a denial

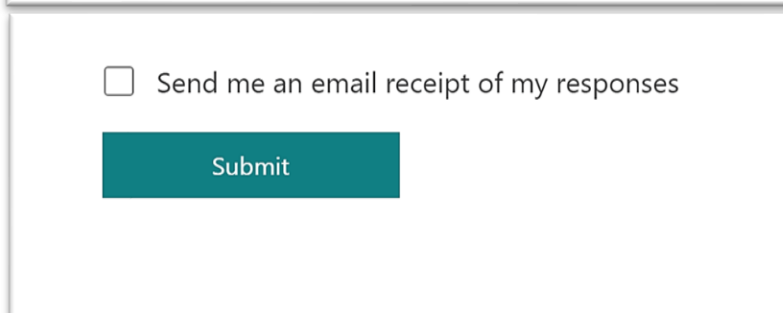
All Phase III appeals and required documentation shall be submitted by **5 p.m. CT on September 8, 2023**. Any submissions after this deadline will be denied. If you need assistance submitting the [Form](#), please consult the Microsoft Form Login and Trouble Shooting Guide (see [Appendix](#)) or email [TNEducation@tn.gov](mailto:TNEducation@tn.gov).

# Appendix: Microsoft Form Login and Troubleshooting Guide

A screenshot of the Microsoft sign-in page. It features the Microsoft logo at the top left, followed by the text "Sign in". Below this is a text input field labeled "Email or phone". Underneath the input field is a link that says "Can't access your account?". At the bottom of the page are two buttons: a grey "Back" button and a blue "Next" button.

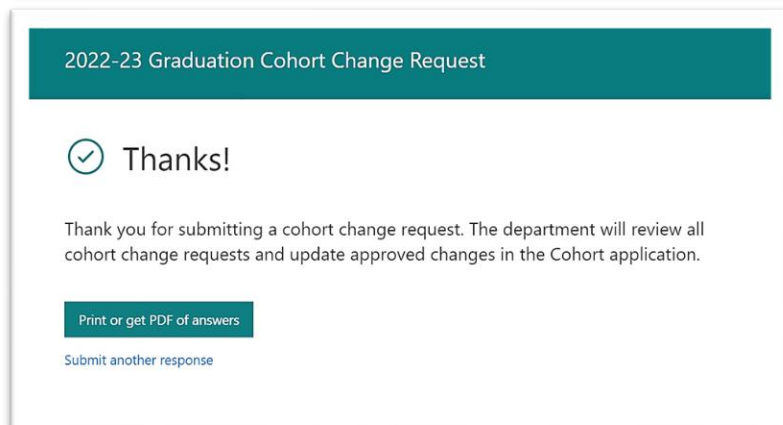
## Microsoft Form Login Requirements

- School and district accountability staff must have an SSO/Orion account to submit a Microsoft Forms for accountability related data appeals, including ACT, Cohort, *Ready Graduate*, accountability data files, accountability and designation, and Report Card data verification process.
- When clicking on the Microsoft Form link, staff will be prompted to sign in. Make sure to sign in with your SSO/Orion account.
- If staff have trouble logging into their SSO/Orion account, they should refer to the [User Guide](#) and contact [DT.Support@tn.gov](mailto:DT.Support@tn.gov) for assistance.

A screenshot of a form section. It contains a checkbox with the text "Send me an email receipt of my responses". Below the checkbox is a large teal button labeled "Submit".

## Submitting a Form

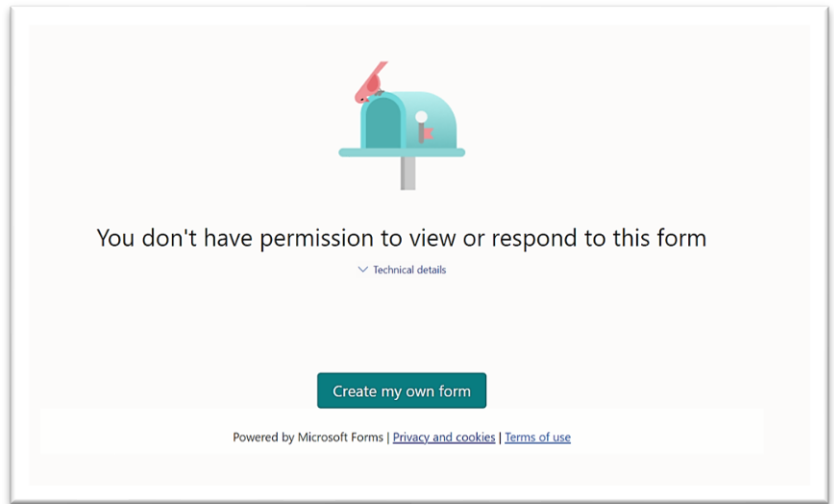
- Staff shall answer all questions and upload the required documentation following the instructions provided by the department.
- When ready to submit, check "Send me an email receipt of my responses" to receive a record of the submission.
- After clicking the Submit button, staff also has the option to save a PDF version of the submission by selecting "Print or get PDF of answers."

A screenshot of a "Thank you" screen. At the top, there is a teal header bar with the text "2022-23 Graduation Cohort Change Request". Below the header, there is a green checkmark icon followed by the text "Thanks!". Underneath, a paragraph reads: "Thank you for submitting a cohort change request. The department will review all cohort change requests and update approved changes in the Cohort application." At the bottom, there is a teal button labeled "Print or get PDF of answers" and a link that says "Submit another response".

### Troubleshooting Common IT issues

If the message to the right shows up when attempting to access the Microsoft form, please attempt the following:

- If the SSO/Orion login information has saved in the internet browser previously, and if
- Using Google Chrome, open a new incognito window and re-sign into the SSO/Orion account.
- Using Microsoft Edge, open a new InPrivate window and re-sign into the SSO/Orion account.
- Using Firefox or Safari, open a new private window and re-sign into the SSO/Orion account.
- If attempting to open the Microsoft forms link from within the data appeals resource guides, make sure the form window opens in the same browser in which the resource guide was opened.



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